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NEWSLETTER

A way to connect families of children and youth with special needs in Michigan
with information, education and support

Down Syndrome



Down syndrome is the most commonly occurring genetic condition.

It occurs in people of all races and economic levels. One in every 691 babies in the United States is born with Down syndrome, or approximately 6,000 births per year. Today, there are more than 400,000 people with Down syndrome living in the United States. Most children with the syndrome are born to women younger than 35 years old simply because younger women have more children. However, the incidence increases with the age of the mother. Common physical traits are low muscle tone, small stature, an upward slant to the eyes, and a single deep crease across the center of the palm. Every person with Down syndrome is a unique individual and may possess these characteristics to different degrees or not at all.

Down syndrome happens when an individual has a full or partial extra copy of chromosome 21. This additional genetic material alters the course of development and causes the characteristics associated with Down syndrome. There are three types of Down syndrome: mosaicism, translocation, and trisomy 21 which accounts for 95% of cases. All 3 types of Down syndrome are genetic conditions (relating to the genes), but only 1% of all cases of Down syndrome have a hereditary component (passed from parent to child through the genes). Prenatal screening tests determine if the baby may have a chance to have the syndrome. A test to look at the baby's chromosomes, called a karyotype, is needed to confirm a diagnosis. The condition can be diagnosed before or after birth. A genetic counselor can help a family determine the type in their family.

Persons with Down syndrome have an increased risk for certain medical conditions such as congenital heart defects, respiratory and hearing problems, Alzheimer's disease, childhood leukemia, and thyroid conditions. Many of these conditions are now treatable, so most will lead healthy lives.

People with Down syndrome have cognitive delays that are mild to moderate. However, this is not indicative of the many strengths and talents that each individual possesses. They are integrated into the regular education system and take part in sports, camping, music, art programs and all the other activities of their communities. Individuals with Down syndrome are valued members of their families and their communities, contributing to society in a variety of ways.

Early intervention services through Early On® Michigan and local public school districts along with a stimulating home environment, good health care, and positive support from family, friends and the community enable children and young adults with Down syndrome to develop their full potential and lead fulfilling lives.

There are many resources to help parents and families of children including:

- The National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS)
- The National Association for Down Syndrome (NADS)
- The Michigan Genetics Resource Center Online Support Group Directory
- The Family Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs



Dyslexia is the most common form of learning difficulty. It is characterized by unexpected problems with reading in children and adults. Many of these individuals are average or above average in intelligence. There is no known cause for dyslexia. It is not connected with other issues, such as vision impairment, hearing impairment, or inadequate reading instruction, though these factors may contribute to the difficulty. Over 40 million Americans suffer from dyslexia.

When dyslexia is not found and treated early on, it tends to get worse and cause literacy issues. By identifying dyslexia early, your child will get the help he needs to reach his potential.

Some signs of dyslexia are:

word reversals, reading tip for pit, difficulty making connection between letters and sounds, letter and number reversals and difficulty rhyming words. It should be noted not all children who struggle with these things aren't dyslexic. Dyslexia can only be determined through a formal evaluation. If you suspect your child may have dyslexia, do not wait! Have your child evaluated.

To learn more about dyslexia, check out these resources:

- **The Michigan Dyslexia Institute (MDI)** presents public awareness programs, and maintains a hotline at **(517) 485-4000** for free information. They also offer workshops and conferences, and have an online catalog. MDI is a partner with the Dyslexia Association of America in a national movement to provide services to persons with dyslexia throughout the United States.
- **Michigan Branch International Dyslexia Association** exists as a resource to provide information about dyslexia and related difficulties.. They offer an annual fall conference, newsletter, on-line book store and toll-free help line at **1-888-IDAMICH (432-6424)**.

▶ October is Lead Poisoning and Prevention Awareness Month

Children are most often poisoned by lead dust and lead paint in older homes (built before 1978). The older the home, the more likely that windows, cupboards, doors porches, and outdoor surfaces contain lead-based paint. Lead dust can come from repairing areas with lead paint, opening and closing windows, and through normal wear and tear of painted areas. Lead dust settles to the floor and gets on children's hands and toys. It enters their bodies when they put their hands or toys into their mouths.

A lead-poisoned child may seem healthy or have any of the following signs:

- ✧ Learning and behavior problems
- ✧ Headaches
- ✧ Weight loss
- ✧ Irritability
- ✧ Tiredness
- ✧ Hearing problems
- ✧ Hyperactivity



Ask your family doctor or Pediatrician to do a blood lead test on your child at 12 months and 24 months of age. Medicaid insurance will pay for the cost of the test if your child is enrolled. If you have private insurance, coverage may vary. The cost of a blood lead test which is sent to the Michigan Department of Community Health Lead Laboratory for analysis is \$11.

Call your local health department or the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at (517) 335-8885 if you have further questions about getting your child tested for lead poisoning.





INFECTIONS

Influenza (Flu)

Children, the Flu, and the Flu Vaccine

As a parent, you do everything you can to protect your children. Buckle them up in the car. Watch them closely when they're in the water. Teach them to look both ways when they cross the street. Warn them not to talk to strangers.

The Get Ready campaign reminds us that we can help our children live healthy lives by making sure that they receive their vaccinations. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone 6 months of age and older get a flu vaccine every year. The flu can be especially serious for children younger than 5 years of age and children of any age with a long-term medical condition like asthma, diabetes and heart disease. These children are at higher risk of serious illness if they get the flu.

The 2012–13 vaccine is already arriving in doctors' offices, pharmacies, and local health departments. Use the

HealthMap Vaccine Finder to find a flu vaccine location near you. If your child does not have health insurance, or does not have insurance that covers vaccines, ask your health care provider or local health department about the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program. VFC provides no- or low-cost vaccines to eligible children, 18 years of age and younger.

Let's help our children get a safe and healthy start to their school year.

Other Materials:

- ▶ **Why get a flu vaccine?** (*Ask the Yaksich family of Michigan.*)
- ▶ **The Flu: A Guide for Parents**
- ▶ www.flu.gov
- ▶ www.michigan.gov/flu (look under "seasonal flu")

>>>>> OCTOBER is National Bullying Prevention Month

In 2006 the PACER National Center for Bullying Prevention founded **National Bullying Day** in response to the need to raise awareness of bullying, as it was historically viewed "a childhood rite of passage" and believed that bullying "made kids tougher," when the reality is that bullying has devastating effects such as school avoidance, loss of self-esteem, increased anxiety, and depression.

The center reached out to the community through partnerships with education based organizations such as National PTA, American Federation of Teachers and National Education Association to provide schools, parents and students with resources to respond to bullying behavior and to begin the shift of societal acceptance of bullying to social change of addressing the issue through education and support. Staff disseminated nationwide press releases through the partners and media channels, encouraging a call to action to educate the community about their role in bullying prevention, which provided the groundwork for the campaign to be consistently recognized as an annual event. The campaign was traditionally held during the first week in the month of October and united communities nationwide to educate and raise awareness of **bullying** prevention.

The event was expanded in 2010 to include activities, education, and awareness building for the entire month. **National Bullying Prevention Month** is recognized in communities across the United States, with hundreds of schools and organizations signing on as partners. Some partners like Facebook, CNN and Yahoo! Kids have supported the month through media outreach and dissemination.

To learn more about bullying prevention and how you can become a champion against bullying visit:
<http://www.pacer.org/bullying/nbpm/>





➔ Early On® Online Courses

DATE	TITLE	LOCATION	COST
October 31, 2012	Early On 101	Online Training	No Fee
October 31, 2012	Eligibility Tools: Calculating Delay Online	Training	No Fee
October 31, 2012	Preschool Special Education Child Online Outcomes	Training	No Fee
October 31, 2012	Procedural Safeguards Online	Online Training	No Fee
October 31, 2012	Transition	Online Training	No Fee
October 31, 2012	Understanding the New 2011 Part C Regulations	Online Training	No Fee

For more information visit: <http://eotta.ccsesa.org/Event.php?ID=2124>

➔ Early On® Trainings: Dates/Locations

Thinking Functionally: Meeting the Unique Needs of Children and their Families

- October 05, 2012 at Tuscola ISD, 1385 Cleaver Road, Caro from 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM (Registration starts at 8:30 AM)

Connecting Infant and Toddler Mental Health with Cognitive and Physical Development

- October 26, 2012 at Muskegon ISD Educational Service Center, 630 Harvey Street, Muskegon from 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM (Registration starts at 8:30 AM)

For more information visit: <http://eotta.ccsesa.org/Calendar.php?n=10&>



Michigan Alliance for Families is very proud of our webinar series. A webinar is an online presentation you can attend without having to leave your home or office. It's like having an opportunity to hear an expert speak on a topic you are interested in at anytime. The presentation is shown and heard on your computer. Each webinar is about an hour long and are free for parents, caregivers, and educators. We partner with experts from across the state to present "live" webinars at specific times (make sure you check out our [webinar calendar](#)). Webinars are archived (saved) for future viewing and are available with accompanying handouts.

They include: Inclusion: The Importance of Including Students with Disabilities in the General Education Classroom; Advocacy and Communication; Getting Started: Eligibility and Evaluation for Special Education Services in Michigan; IEP Notice of Provision of Services and Prior Written Notice; The Importance of the Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) Statement; Thinking About Goals and Objectives; IEP Supports and Services—including

Accommodations and Modifications; Assistive Technology Considerations; Visual Support Strategies; Behavior is Communication; Peer to Peer Support – the LINK Program; An Introduction to Positive Behavior Supports; Discipline/ Suspension/ Expulsion: Protections for Students with IEPs; Section 504 Plans: An Overview; Writing Effective Complaints and Special Education Mediation in Michigan.

To find out more about our webinars visit:
www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/webinar

➔ Michigan Alliance for Families Trainings: Dates/Times/Locations

Rethinking Guardianship with Dohn Hoyle

- October 2, 2012 at disAbility Connections, 409 Linden Avenue, Jackson from 9:30 AM–12:30 PM.

Understanding the IEP and It's Connection to Your Child's Success

- October 3, 2012 at Eastern Michigan University Autism Collaborative Center, 1055 Cornell Road, Ypsilanti from 6 PM–8 PM.

➤ **Michigan Alliance for Families Trainings: Dates/Times/Locations** (continued)

What Every Parent Needs to Know About....” “Content of the IEP”

- October 4, 2012 at Collaborative Solutions 269 Summit Drive, Waterford from 6:00 PM–9:00 PM

Rethinking Guardianship with Dohn Hoyle

- October 9, 2012 at Redford District Library 25320 W. Six Mile Road, Redford from 5:00 PM–8:00 PM

Understanding the IEP and It's Connection to Your Child's Success

- October 9, 2012 in Baraga at Ojibwa Senior Center, 208 Main Street, Baraga from 5 PM–8 PM.

Least Restrictive Environment and Inclusion

- October 10, 2012 at Gogebic Community College Lindquist Student Center, Upper Level Courtside Room 4946, Jackson Road, Ironwood from 5 PM–8 PM CST

Least Restrictive Environment and Inclusion

- October 11, 2012 at Dickinson-Iron ISD Conference Room A, 1074 Pyle Drive, Kingsford from 5 PM–8 PM CST.

IEP- What to Know Before You Go

- October 12, 2012 at Portage Family Place Room #4, 503 Park Avenue, Houghton from 11 AM–1 PM.

High School Education Planning and Transition to Adulthood

- October 13, 2012 at the Copper Country ISD, Conference Room B, 809 Hecla, Hancock from 9 AM–2 PM.

Learning Disabilities—What You Need to Know

- October 20, 2012 at the Lenawee Intermediate School District, TECH Center, 1372 N. Main Street, Adrian from 9 AM–12 PM.

Effective Parent Skills for IEP Meetings

- October 24, 2012 at the Charity Lutheran Church, 17220 Kelly Road, Detroit from 10 AM–12 PM.

➤ **Michigan Family-to-Family Health Information and Education Trainings: Dates/Times/Locations**

Accessing Health Care Coverage and Services For My Child

- October 15, 2012 Marquette
- October 16, 2012 Kingsford
- October 18, 2012 Gladwin

Essential Communication Skills for IEP Team Meetings

- October 29, 2012 Stanton

Everything My Child Needs to Know About Sexuality But, I Was Afraid to Tell!

- October 8, 2012 Charlotte

Helping Families Tell Their Stories

- October 23, 2012 Clinton Township
- October 25, 2012 Bay City

Looking for a Good Life!

- October 4, 2012 Menominee
- October 16, 2012 Bad Axe

What Are My Rights and Responsibilities

- October 4, Howell,
- October 9, 2012 Sault Ste. Marie
- October 11, 2012 Menominee
- October 29, 2012 Otsego

To register for trainings, visit:

<http://www.bridges4kids.org/f2f/training.htm#1>.

● **ANNUAL CONFERENCES**

4th Annual disAbility Awareness Expo

- Oct. 13, 2012 at the Education and Human Services Building on the CMU campus in Mount Pleasant from 10 am to 2 pm

For more information about the disABILITY Awareness Expo: Contact Beth Kennedy, DeafBlind Central director, at (989) 774-2726 or kenne1bm@cmich.edu

Health Issues in Arab Communities

- October 16, 2012–October 17, 2012 at The Dearborn Inn, 20301 Oakwood Blvd., Dearborn

For more information contact Madhia Tariq at

(313) 216-2240 or mtariq@arabhealthconference.org

